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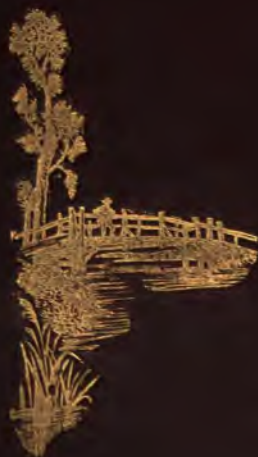
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Leisure

Hours.

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1892



FROM A BOOK FUND COMMEMORATING
RUTH GERALDINE ASHEN
CLASS OF 1931

It's a sad thing
 when a man is to be so soon forgotten
And the shining in his soul
 gone from the earth
With no thing remaining;

And it's a sad thing
 when a man shall die
And forget love
 which is the shiningness of life;

But it's a sadder thing
 that a man shall forget love
And he not dead but walking in the field
 of a May morning
And listening to the voice of the thrush.

— R.G.A., in *A Yearbook of
Stanford Writing*, 1931

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Leisure Hours.

"A THING OF SHREDS AND PATCHES."

BY

J. C. STEWART.

PRIVATE CIRCULATION.

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LEISURE HOURS.

The Return.

LAND of my childhood, happy land, once more
My footsteps tread thy wild romantic shore ;
Once more thy mountains, tow'ring to the skies,
Thy "cloud capp'd" hills, before my view arise ;
Once more along thy burnies' sides I rove,
List to the warbling songsters of the grove,
Or tread the mazes of the wooded glen,
Far from the noisy haunts of busy men.

Yes, lovely scenes, unchanged ye still remain,
Your beauty still ye favour'd haunts retain !
But where are they who ever used to be
Partakers with me in my boyish glee ?
Who clamber'd with me up the mountain steep,
Who with me braved the dangers of the deep ;
Advent'rous souls, who o'er the rush-bound lake,
In tiny bark would dare the voyage make ;
Who nimbly with me up the rocks have sprung,
To rob the blackbird of her unfledged young ;
Or pillaged oft, 'mid merriment and glee,
The village lawyer's or the parson's tree ?

Time has been busy ; Ah ! how busy here :
My play-hour cronies and companions dear

Are gone, like snow-flakes melting in the sun,
Or, like ripe fruit, have dropt off one by one ;
And few are left, alas ! how very few,
Of all the numbers whom in youth I knew.

And where is she who on the village green,
Year after year we hail'd our fair May Queen ?
To whom we bent the knee of homage low,
And placed the rose-wreath on her snowy brow ?
Who the fond heart of many a swain had bound,
The standing toast of all the country round ;
The light of heart, the careless, happy, free,
Unmatch'd in mirth industrious as the bee ?

Go, ask the sexton, he perchance can tell
The fate of one whom all had loved so well ;
And as he tells the oft-told tale, he tries
In vain to hide the moisture of his eyes ;
For tales of sorrow reach the poor man's heart
Sooner than all the pageantry of art :
" 'Twas in the summer," thus his tale he told,
" There to our village came a seaman bold ;
Reckless and wild, he own'd but passion's law,
And sigh'd to grasp each budding flower he saw.
Our village rose hung on the parent stem,
Blooming and sparkling like a costly Gem ;
He gain'd possession of her guileless heart,
But, ah ! the scoundrel play'd a villain's part :
The flower was worn in triumph for a day,
Then faded, withered, heedless, thrown away.

" He went to sea and left the ruin'd maid,
Whose rosy cheek had now began to fade ;
She seldom spoke, was never known to smile,

But pined in secret o'er her lover's guile.
A babe was born ; her father spurn'd his poor
Heart and health-broken daughter from his door :
Weeping, she turn'd her silently away,
Sunk on the threshold, and essay'd to pray.

" 'Twas dead of winter, bitter was the blast
That, snow drift laden, went careering past ;
Toward the beach with faltering step she turn'd,
While in her brain the fire of frenzy burn'd.

" Next morn they found her on a rock reclined,
Her babe and breast unshelter'd from the wind ;
Death was enstamp'd upon her pallid brow,—
And there," he pointed, " she is sleeping now."
No marble tells her lineage or her name,
No stone records the story of her shame.

Ah ! what a change a few short years have made ;
How many a loved one in the tomb is laid !
Those whom I left in manhood's strength and prime,
Are standing, grey-hair'd, on the verge of time ;
And the young sprigs who were but newly blown,
Are saplings strong, or trees maturely grown.
The laughing maidens with the flaxen hair,
Are women fighting with a world of care ;
And a strange group of little ones are seen,
Filling our places on the village green.
A stranger sits upon the teacher's stool,
And a new generation throng the school.
I too am changed, for few, alas ! can trace
A former feature in this care-worn face ;
Soon must I follow to that distant bourne,
" From whence no traveller can e'er return."

The Wreck.

MOEN on the waters, proudly away
Dashes the bark through the ocean spray,
With sounds of joy, with the voice of song,
Borne by the breezes gaily along ;
While the parting prayer is breath'd around,
Onward is speeding the homeward bound.

Hearts from care and from sorrow free,
Child of the Ocean, are dwelling in thee ;
Mothers are calming their children's fears,
Wiping away their terror-caused tears,
Pointing their thoughts to that distant land
Where awaits an eager expectant band ;
Brothers whose noisy mirth shall hail,
Sisters whose welcome cannot fail
To cheer their hearts and excite their glee,
When safe from the dangers of the sea.

Night on the ocean, dark overhead,
The black clouds hang like the pall of the dead ;
The waters are boiling and bubbling below,
The voice of the seamen is fearfully low :
Now the canvas dangles against the mast,
Then swells with a gust of the fitful blast ;
And prayers are rising, alas ! in vain,
For safety in 'midst th' Atlantic main.

Morning again, so lovely and fair,
Who could think the storm had been there ?
Where is the vessel that proudly reared
Its head, as it on through the waters steered ?
Where are the hearts so happy and gay,

That but yesterday sported the time away?
Where are the babes and their mothers, where?
And the sire whose brow was marked with care?
All sunk in the overwhelming wave,
All buried deep in that living grave!

Friends at land, ye no more may meet
With those ye fondly waited to greet;
Sisters must sigh for the loved and lost,
Brothers must weep for the tempest-toss'd,
Sorrow must whiten the maiden's cheek,
And grief the fond mother's heart may break;
But that barque and its crew have pass'd away,
And are sleeping sound 'neath the ocean's spray.

The Two Poets.

THE rich aspirant after public fame,
The candidate for notice and a name,
Softly reclining on his cushion'd seat,
A rich and costly Brussels at his feet,
With all the comfort affluence may command,
(Perchance some titled Nabob of the land),
With tiny fingers sweeps the living lyre,
And warms enraptured with poetic fire;
In Annual or Album writes his lays,
And gains, at least, a fashionable praise.
But, lo! the Poet of the poor behold;

His cupboard empty, and his hearthstone cold !
Poorly attired, no laurel round his head,
He writes, and 'tis to gain his daily bread :
The world neglects him in the sunny hour,
And lives unconscious of the Poet's power.

Even so the gifted Fergusson expired,
By the bright lamp of heavenly genius fired :
Thus Otway pined, and, miserably fed,
Starved, and was number'd with the silent dead.

The Poet rich, basking in fortune's beams,
Looks upon life, and all a summer seems ;
No shady mists to dim the prospect rise,
No clouds obscure the sunshine of the skies ;
On pleasure's calm unruffled wave he sails,
Nor hears, nor knows, aught of the ocean's gales.

How different he, unaided and alone,
To fame a stranger, to the world unknown ;
Through rocky opposition who must carve,
His only prospect—to succeed or starve
Who sees his wife, the loved one of his heart,
The scanty morsel 'mong his babies part,
Or hears for food their still unanswer'd cry,
While the big tear stands in the mother's eye,
Beholds them pining on the unwholesome fare,
Their future portion, misery and despair.

Ye favour'd sons of fortune and of fame,
For pleasure who invoke the muses' flame
A helping hand, in your successes, give
To poorer brethren, who must write to live.

The Patriot's Death.

'Twas eve, the sun was setting bright,
Refulgent in the golden light,
 The western wave was lying ;
Within a gloomy dungeon cell,
Where scarce a straggling sunbeam fell,
 A patriot was dying.
One of a small heroic band,
Who dared their tyrants to withstand,
 And ventured to be free ;
Who boldy to a wond'ring world,
Oppress'd by slavery unfurled
 The flag of liberty.

The moon is up, the evening star
Is glimmering on the prison bar,
The soul is struggling to be free ;
 The death-dew now
 Is on his brow,
 His frame is wrung with agony.
The spirit bursts its bonds and soars away,
All that the tyrant holds is the insensate clay.

'Tis morn, the shades of night have fled,
And o'er the dwelling of the dead
 The glorious sun has risen ;
How many a noble heart was there
Pining, the victim of despair,
 Within that dreary prison.

But thou art free, thy noble end
 Has taught our spirits not to bend,
 But firmly stand the test
 Which tyranny ordains for those
 Who dare oppression's wrongs oppose,
 Like thee, our noblest, best.

Soul of the murder'd martyr, from on high,
 From thy blest habitation in the sky,
 Look on the cause we plead, until, like thee,
 Death from the tyrant's clutches sets us free.

Maggy Millar.

LET misers hoard their dirty cash,
 Wha like to hear the guineas clash,
 I carena for sic paltry trash,
 As heaps o' siller;
 But faith, through thick an' thin I'll dash,
 For Maggy Millar.

I wadna gi'e ae smile frae thee,
 For countless gems ayont the sea,
 Sin' they could never bring to me
 Sic rapturous bliss,
 As when on thy sweet lips I pree
 A balmy kiss.

Alack a-day! she's married noo,
 The lass I thocht sae firm an' true;

What tempted her the deed to do ?
She wasna blate ;
I wish the act she mayna rue,
When its ower late.

O' marriage then, I'll think nae mair,
I fear 'tis but a life o' care,
An' lasses ne'er will look sae fair,
Wi' charms a host :
Out ower them a' I'll firmly stare,—
Meg Millar's lost.

Emma.

"It is my Emma's bridal day," I heard
Her mother say.
Now Emma ever was the favourite bird,
The blythe and gay,
Whose warblings cheered the little nest,
And animated all the rest
Of her companions gay.

But there was sorrow in the mother's tone,
And in her eye
The tear-drop stood ; and ever and anon
Burst forth a sigh :
It should have been a merry day
That gave the blooming bride away,
Then wherefore comes that sigh ?

Why there was sorrow lurking in her heart,
She could not tell ;
She wish'd not from the darling child to part,
She loved so well :
But dark forebodings still would rush,
Her fondest, dearest hopes to crush,—
All surely was not well.

Time sped along, hasting on rapid wing,
A year had fled,
When messengers the gladsome tidings bring
That Emma's bed
Had bless'd been with a lovely boy,—
His father's pride, his mother's joy,—
Oh ! happy nuptial bed.

But Death, grim tyrant, envious of their bliss,
Levell'd his dart,
A dart which never has been known to miss
The victim's heart ;
And Emma and her baby sleep
In their last slumber, long and deep :
The husband broke his heart.

“It is my Emma's burial-day,” I heard
Her mother say ;
“My Emma and her lovely little bird
Are gone away
And nothing more remains for me
But following to where they be,
Far from this world away.

Fair and Free.

HAIL my pretty little beauty,
Every grace enshrined in thee ;
Slave to no denying duty,
On thou roamist, fair and free.

Like a vessel on the ocean,
Dashing through the rippling sea ;
So, majestic in thy motion,
On thou scuddest, fair and free.

Sipping sweets from every flow'r,
Like the little busy bee ;
Drinking pleasure every hour,
On thou floatest, fair and free.

Mine alone, alas ! thou art not,
Would that such thou e'er might'st be ;
Inclination bids me part not
From my loved one—fair and free.

Then accept the heart I proffer,
Since it beats alone for thee ;
Do not lightly treat the offer,
Be my loved one—fair and free.

The Soldier's Funeral.

HARK ! it is the muffled drum ;
Softly, 'tis this way they come ;
See, the warlike rank approaches,
Arms reversed, and lighted torches :
Soldier sleep, thy race is run,
All thy warlike deeds are done ;
Sleep, and may thy waking be
To bliss in immortality !

Thy native home is far away ;
Kindred and friends, Ah ! where are they ?
Perhaps thy widow'd wife shall weep,
She does not share her soldier's sleep :
Perhaps thy orphan child shall tread
The turf that grows above thy head,
Unconscious pluck the flow'rs that wave
Unheeded o'er the soldier's grave !

Stanzas.

How oft amid a barren wild,
The blushing rose,
Shedding around its perfume mild,
Unheeded grows ;
Save by the breeze which flutters past,
Or o'er it flies,
Till nipp'd by some unkindly blast,
It droops and dies.

So, to, 'mid Afric's deserts drear,
Of barren sand,
The weary traveller, struck with fear,
No hope at hand,
Beholds where he expected not
Some bubbling spring ;
Some sweet Oasis of a spot,
Of verdant green.

Thus life appears a barren waste
Without a flow'r
As o'er its wide expanse we haste,
Till sorrow o'er,
Some little spot, expected not,
Of joy appears,
Te cheer the darkness of our lot
And dry our tears.

“Man not made to Mourn.”

Go, watch the east, and view the sun arise,
Or glorious gilding the meridian skies ;
The flow'rs are op'ning to the genial ray,
And shed their perfume on the new-born day.
List, as the lark its grateful matin sings,
And soars aloft on still unwearied wings,—
Then say, shall man, creation's lord alone
Of all creation, bear a thankless tone,—
Receive all blessings with an impious scorn,
And grumbling mutter, “Man was made to mourn.”

Go, tell the story to the coward slave
Who dare not priestly prejudices brave,
Who lives in dread of other worlds unknown,
And finds no good or comfort in his own ;
Whose soul is thankless, and whose heart is sear'd
With fear of what no good man ever fear'd ;
Who dares believe that Nature's wondrous plan
Was form'd but for a prison-house to man,
Where, like a felon, guilty and forlorn,
He might repine, his portion but to mourn.

How nobler far is the sublime pursuit
That elevates the man above the brute,
The exercise of reason, bounteous given
To open bare to man the gifts of heaven ;
To teach him that each budding little flower
Which lives, the passing beauty of an hour,—
Each blade of grass, each monarch of the wood,
The oak which for a century has stood,—
Each plant which beautifies the beauteous earth,
For *his* enjoyment or *his* use had birth.

For him the ox is fatt'ning in the stall,
Thousands of creatures answer at his call ;
For him the wood, the vineyard, and the field ;
The mighty total of their produce yield ;
For him the feathery tenants of the air,
The scaly dwellers of the deep prepare ;
For him the sun diffuses heat and light,
The moon assumes th' ascendancy at night,
The rain is given to freshen and renew,
And o'er the parch'd earth falls the fresh'ning dew ;

Each object in the vast creation pants
To soothe his woes or mitigate his wants.
Reason would bid us thank the mighty Mind
Who to our wants and comforts is so kind ;
'Tis priestcraft only treats his gifts with scorn,
And tells the falsehood, " Man was made to mourn."

Eliza.

How oft have I wander'd, Eliza, with thee,
By the clear winding streams of the Boyne ;
How oft have we paused the pale moon-beam to see,
On its dancing blue waters to shine.

How oft on thy lips have I press'd the fond kiss,
The sweet kiss of affection and love ;
That pure love which reigns in the mansions of bliss,
And enricheth the regions above.

But the cloister demanded thee for its own,
And its call thou didst haste to obey ;
Not remaining to list to thy lover's moan,
Ere thou spedst on thy journey away.

To the things of the world thou bad'st a farewell,
And left its gay mansions for ever ;
Oh ! pray that hereafter our spirits may dwell
Where no call be made that they sever.

And when at the altar of God thou dost bend,
With the image of Jesus before thee,
A pray'r to the throne of Omnipotence send,
For him who presumed to adore thee.

To the Memory of R——t A——r.

A YOUNG SOLDIER WHO DIED IN INDIA.

In the distant East, 'neath Indian skies,
On a new-made grave I stepp'd,
The humble spot where a stranger lies,
Where a British soldier slept.

A thoughtless youth, he had left his home
And traversed the stormy deep ;
He had no need so far to roam
For a spot whereon to sleep.

But his heart with hope was beating high,
And the blood in his veins was warm ;
He cared not for the threat'ning sky,
Nor heeded the low'ring storm.

But pestilence, stronger than men of might,
Had mark'd him for its prey ;
Ere ever his arm was raised in fight,
He was mouldering into clay.

Oh ! boy, how thy frantic mother wept
When the fatal news arrived ;
How she tore her hair, as of hope bereft,
Nor wish'd she to have survived.

On his eyes thy father clapp'd his hand
But tears trickled to the ground ;
And thy sisters, a dejected band,
Stood weeping, their sire around.

Thy brother, who dream'd of thee winning fame,
And envied thy bright career,
Weeps over thy undistinguish'd name,
And thy distant lowly bier.

The Wreckers' Song.

HARK ! surely that was a minute gun,
Faintly heard 'mid the ocean's roar ;
Some good ship high on the rocks is thrown,
And soon will be drifted on shore.
See, the blue flame rises from her deck
And lights up the white-crested wave ;
Soon, soon she will be a total wreck,
And her crew find a wat'ry grave ;
Then down to the beach where the ruin lies ;
Down, down, wreckers down, and secure your prize.

To the wreckers a godsend it comes,
Then take it, my lads, while you may ;
Over the waters her signal booms,
Then away to the beach, away.
We go not to spoil, but go to save,
To save from the swallowing deep ;
And what we can rescue from the wave,
As a matter of course we keep.
Then down to the beach where the ruin lies ;
Down, down, wreckers down, and secure your prize.

Lines.

WRITTEN AT THE GRAVE OF A SCHOOLFELLOW.

Death has been busy ev'rywhere ;
On either hand are seen
The traces of the track o'er which
The ravager has been.

My hand is on the tombstone,
And my foot is on the grave,
Of one whom I in boyhood knew,—
A merry, laughing knave.

Strange ! this should be the very spot
Where, on each holiday,
A band of happy schoolfellows
Were wont to come and play.

'Twas then a field in which the modest
Mountain-daisy grew,
O'er which, at ev'ry idle hour,
The ball from cricket flew.

Where golf was play'd and quoits were thrown,
And laughing faces seen ;
And nought save happiness was known
Upon that well-fill'd green.

Well-filled it *was*, 'tis crowded *now*,
Here great and humble lie ;
The lordly and the peasant here
Are on equality.

Would I might sleep on some such spot
 Like this, to mem'ry dear ;
 And that some friend for me might shed
 The sympathetic tear.

For who would care to live, nor hear
 Sweet friendship's soothing tone ?
 Or who would wish to pass away
 Unnoticed and unknown ?

Oldbridge.

WHERE WAS FOUGHT THE FAMOUS BATTLE OF THE BOYNE.

IRELAND ! I love thee, country of the brave !
 Land of the noble son, the manly sire ;
 Land of green fields and daughter of the wave,
 Birthplace of heroes and of souls of fire !
 I love thee, all oppressed as thou art ;
 Borne down as thou hast been by foreign foes ;
 Thy name shall be engraven on my heart,
 For I have felt the keenness of thy woes.

Ev'n now I stand upon the fatal spot
 Where Irish courage so conspicuous shone ;
 Would thy dark deeds could ever be forgot,
 Thou black and fatal battle of the Boyne !
 Here stands the pillar of the conqueror's pride,
 The last poor record of the bloody fray ;
 The foe has triumph'd, and may now deride,
 But never shall its mem'ry fade away.

The time shall come when we will be revenged,
For black oppression's knell shall yet be rung !
The tyrant prostrate and our wrongs avenged,
And foreign domination from us flung.
Here stood the armies on that fatal day,
While over them the very heavens did frown ;
The prize they fought for was a sceptre's sway,
The goal a kingdom, and the stake a crown !

Back, Protestant invader, get you back,
What seek your soldiers and your minions here ?
To break our fondest hopes upon the rack,
And wring from eyes, unwont to weep, the tear !
Here fell the choicest of thy foreign troops ;
And, ah ! their death, invader, lies with thee :
The orphan weeps, the trembling widow droops,
And on thy head their mingled curses be.

Flow on, majestic river, in thy course,
Thy waters drank the blood of many slain :
Truth was compell'd to yield the ground to force,
And justice came not in the conqueror's train.
Ireland ! misfortunes coupled with thy name,
And scorn's opprobrious finger points to thee ;
Rouse thee ! and shake from off thy sod the shame,
Rouse the, resist, and be thou once more free !

I have traced thy name.

I HAVE traced thy name, did'st thou ask me where?
 I would tell thee, not in the ambient air
 For the balmy breeze and the hurricane blast,
 As it sweeps in terrible fury past,
 Would have swept it for ever away, away :
 I traced it not there, for it would not stay.

I have traced thy name ; but, Oh ! do not deem
 It is traced in the dancing sunny beam !
 For the clouds will darken the brightest sky,
 And the fairest tints of the rainbow die ;
 And the sun will set o'er the closing day,
 And his beams in the far west fade away.

I have traced thy name with a trembling hand,
 But I traced it not in the sea-shore sand ;
 For the ebbing and flowing of the tide
 Would not long have suffer'd it to abide :
 The rippling wave would have wash'd it away ;
 I traced it not there, for it would not stay.

I traced it where it must ever remain,
 'Mid sighing and sunshine, sorrow and pain :
 While my pulse shall beat or my heart's-blood flow,
 Decay my affection can never know ;
 My love is fix'd whence it may not depart,
 And thy name is engraven on my heart !

The old Man to his Wife.

IN the spring of life we met,
When our hearts with hope were beating ;
Summer's hours awaited yet,
Time was then too slowly fleeting ;
On we bounded, o'er hill and dale,
Life was all a merry tale.

Summer came, 'twas glorious then,
In the sun's bright noontide basking ;
Love's soft vows we plighted then,
Each from each a heart was asking
Pleasant past th' enraptured hour,
Life was all a fairy bow'r.

Summer past and autumn brought,
Bearing of time-past the fruits :
Were they, say, with sorrow fraught ?
Had we planted bitter roots ?
No, though grief to all must come,
Safe we bore our harvest home.

Winter's snows around us fall,
Shortly we must quit the scene ;
'Tis the fate awaits us all,
What we are, or what have been :
Who the future can presage ?
Who can read th' unwritten page ?

The Mother to her Son in Heaven.

My son, thy soul to Heaven is gone,
To the mansions of the blest,
Say, when amid the happy throng,
Angels and seraphim among,
In that happy land of rest,
Wilt thou turn thy thoughts to earth again,
Where friends and kindred dwell,
And thinking on all their sorrow and pain
Will thy breast with pity swell
For the friends who sojourn here below
While thou art far away,
Where thou canst nothing of sorrow know
In the realms of endless day ?

My son, when thy fond mother weeps
The absence of her boy,
And treads alone thy wonted walk,
Say, wilt thou with her spirit talk,
Inspiring a throb of joy ?
Wilt thou softly sigh in the passing breeze
That mournfully sweeps along,
As if howling a dirge the fun'ral trees,
The cypress and willow among ?
Yes, I feel that thou wilt come, my boy,
To bid me come away
To the land of life, of love, of joy,
To the realms of endless day.

The Village Maid.

I've seen the proud and stately fair,
The beauty of the ball,
Who moved to music's magic air
Along the festive hall.

I've heard the sweet symphonious strain
From beauty's lips to pour,
While list'ners scarcely could refrain
From stooping to adore.

I've seen a maiden, fair and gay,
One almost free from faults,
Borne in the giddy dance away,
Or whirling in the waltz.

And I have turn'd me from the scene
In which I had no part
'Mid all the beauties I had been,
Not one had touch'd my heart.

But, far from busy scenes remote,
In a sequester'd glade,
Within an ivy-cover'd cot,
There dwells a village maid,

Whose laughing eye of heav'nly blue
Beams with expressive grace ;
Lips, sweet as roses tipp'd with dew,
Adorn her lovely face.

Not all the beauty of a court
Could match this flow'ret wild,
Or make an impress on my heart
Like this sweet Nature's child.

Three Queries.

" YESTERDAY, where is it ? "
'Tis gone to give its record in,
Its record of committed sin ;
Of duties shunn'd, of dull delay,
The record of a mis-spent day !

" Where is to-day ? "
'Tis fleeting past thee like a post,
Let not its precious hours be lost ;
Use it, employ it ; Oh ! beware,
No moment hast thou got to spare.

" Where is to-morrow ? "
'Tis with the years beyond the flood,
In keeping of Creation's God :
Ere earth to-morrow's sun shall see,
Thou may'st be in Eternity !

Magdalene.

I SAW thee when a little girl,
Just blooming sweet sixteen ;
Upon thy fair and damask cheek
No care or grief had been.

I loved the flashing of thine eye,
So unconstrained and free ;
Thy hearty and thy joyous laugh
Was music sweet to me.

I met thee next in womanhood,
In all thy beauty's pride,
And he, the highly favour'd one,
Thy husband, by thy side.
I thought me of the full-blown rose,
So " beautiful and fair,"
And felt no other flow'r could with
Thee in thy bloom compare.

I saw thee then, a mother bend
Above thy baby boy,
And kiss his little pouting lips
With all a mother's joy.
I saw thee next in widowhood
Kneel on the grass-green sod,
And dedicate that little one
An offering to God.

Angels were waiting to convey
The proffer'd gift on high :
And thy vow of dedication
Was recorded in the sky.
And when beside *thy* grave I stood,
And laid *thee* in the clay,
I sighed to think the fairest, best,
So quickly pass away.

The Land of my Fathers.

THE land of my fathers, the land of the free,
The land of my fathers, Old Scotia, for me ;
O'er whose valleys no conqu'ror's banner e'er blew,
O'er whose mountains th' eagles of Rome never flew ;
Whose rights shall for ever untarnish'd remain,
And whose sons shall their liberties ever retain.
The land of my fathers, &c.

The days of a Bruce and Wallace are past,
But while time rolls along shall their memories last ;
Their spirits continue to throb in our veins,
And the thistle, our emblem of safety, remains :
In days that are gone by our banners were flung
To the breeze, and the death-knell of tyranny rung.
Then shout for the land of the brave and the free ;
The land of my fathers, Old Scotia, for me.

Aston.

OLD Aston town, a long farewell !
'Tis doom'd that we must part,
But many a tender thought of thee
Is woven round my heart.

Each walk, each lane, each favour'd haunt,
Each well-remember'd spot,
In recollection fond arise,
And will not be forgot.

The tree, the wood, the open heath,
The railway and canal ;
Kind mem'ry hath a thought for each,
A feeling for them all.

Here, in the Lovers' Loan I've roam'd,
Wi' Jeanie at my side ;
Ah ! little did I deem that she
Would be another's bride.

And here, 'mid rural bliss complete,
I've pluck'd the roses wild,
And gambol'd o'er the sunny fields,
E'en like a little child.

Aston ! sweet place, methinks I see
Thy many beauties still,
And fancy gives me back again
The music of thy rill.

Thy lovely walks, thy shady groves,
Thy tall and stately trees ;
And, to the townsman dearer still,
Thy sweet salubrious breeze.

Thy pretty snow-white cottages,
Thy much-frequented stile,
Near which in stately grandeur stands
The antiquated pile.

Where lived the lord of many a rood
Of rich producing land ;
But whose escutch'on bears a blot,—
The dirk and bloody hand.

Mark of some deed of blood, whose stain
 May not be wiped away,
 Till 'neath the ground in dismal vault,
 For seven years and a day,
 The heir of Aston Hall shall live,
 If live so long he may !

Then there's the church, the sacred place,
 Where piety resides ;
 Amid whose lonely aisles at night
 The ghost and goblin glides.

Where ev'ry Sabbath morn my pew
 Most rigidly I kept ;
 And when our parson prosed away
 Have most profoundly slept.

Our tavern ! but what words can e'er
 Describe the motely scene ?
 Or paint the happy faces which
 Within thy walls have been.

Thy garden, with its serpent walks
 And fountain bubbling clear ;
 Thy shaded seat and velvet lawn
 Are still to mem'ry dear.

With many an old acquaintance here
 The ev'ning I would pass,
 And oft grew glorious o'er the soul
 Exhilarating glass.

But, ah ! those happy times have fled
And I am far away
From the dear spots where I was wont
In other years to play :

And old acquaintances are gone,
Departed one by one ;
And I am left to mourn their loss,
Dejected and alone.

Religion.

BLOOD flow'd, Religion, in the days of old,
When Druid priests before thine altar bow'd ;
And when in warlike guise the Roman bold
To worship came, blood, blood it was that flow'd.

Blood flow'd when Juggernaut's tremendous car
Pass'd where the victim penitent was kneeling,
While white-robed Bramins, with the shout of war,
Its bloody course was onward slowly wheeling.

And when the crescent glittered on the plain,
And scimitars were gleaming in the sun,
Drawn to defend it in its loss or gain,
There was another work of blood begun.

But, when the peaceful Message from Above,
The Embassy of Good to guilty man,—
When JESUS came, the Messenger of Love,
And introduced Redemption's Godlike Plan.

One would have thought that peace on earth would reign,
Her sway extended and her throne secure,
That men her willing subjects would remain,
And that her empire ever would endure.

But no ! the deadly weapons have been drawn,
Sect against sect been in the field array'd ;
The truth or falsehood of a cause been shown
By virtue of the battle's dread parade.

Say, is the Christian's God a holy God,
Whom pure and holy deeds alone can please ;
And will men bring an offering of blood,
His justice or His anger to appease ?

Learn, puny mortal, that, to serve Him right,
You and your offerings of blood must part ;
The sacrifice accepted in His sight
Is the pure offering of an humble heart !

The Friends of Former Days.

I SING of other days departed,
Of friends no longer here ;
With whom we, light and merry hearted,
Brought in the bye-gone year.
Their recollections must not perish,
Their love demands our praise ;
Our hearts shall ever fondly cherish
The friends of former days.

The scenes we loved are still around us,
Where we were wont to roam ;
But they who to their beauty bound us
Have wandered far from home :
And strange and unknown faces meet us
In our accustom'd ways ;
But our hearts are theirs who used to greet us
As friends in former days.

A Birth and a Death in an Irish Family.

It was in the eve of St. Patrick's day
That Pat Murphy was born in his father's mud dwelling,
Which stood in the sweet little town of Baltray ;
So I hope you believe 'tis the truth I am telling.

For truth is a jewel what will not decay,
However abused it continues to shine,
'Tis a gem which a fool would alone throw away,
A pearl rather costly to go to the swine.

Now that Pat should be born on so lucky an eve,
By the powers, there was something mysterious in it ;
But if you my story will only believe,
I'll clear up the matter for you in a minute.

For the old wives were summon'd to give their decision,
And the fine whisky-punch of ould Murphy to try,
When the motion was carried, without a division,
That Saint Patrick himself had a hand in the pie.

The baby commencing to hoot and to squall,
 A nurse was procured on the instant to suck it,
 When a girl at the head of the stair gave a bawl
 That poor Mrs. Murphy was kicking the bucket.

There was running of midwives and maidens about,
 Without doing good, I am sure, in the least ;
 When some one suggested dispatching a scout,
 So a boy on a donkey was sent for a priest.

Old Father M'Guire was a merry old soul,
 Addicted, as all is cloth are, to good feeding,
 Who loved a stiff glass and a full flowing bowl,
 And was monstrosly fond of a wake or a wedding.

He mounted the donkey the boy had bestrode,
 And crossing a bog where the newly cut turf lay,
 Succeeded in taking a nigher-hand road
 To the goal of his wishes, the dwelling of Murphy.

Arrived at the room where the sick woman lay,
 He granted the comfort prescribed by his church ;
 Whitewash'd, on her journey he sent her away
 To the half-way house there—to be left in the lurch.

The rites of the church had been duly respected,
 The room was well sprinkled—to frighten the devil,
 The poteen was set and a chairman elected,
 When the guests set them down for enjoying a revel.

They had Father M'Guire at the head of the board ;
 Mrs. Keegan, the nurse, at the opposite end ;
 Tom Reilly, the piper, as proud as a lord.
 Gave his fiddle the tap and his bowstring the bend.

There was Peter O'Flinn from the hill-head of Clogher,
Charley O'Brien, and mad Peter Carney ;
There was rich Biddy Sweenie, her dad's only daughter,
And smart Jemmy Martin, renown'd for his blarney.

There was sweet Miss M'Innes, far-famed for her beauty,
And Peter O'Connor, set down for a rake ;
And numbers more came to take part in the duty
Of giving their neighbour a dacentish wake.

Four candles were fixed on each side of the bed,
A crucifix placed in the dead woman's hands,
A pray'r by his reverence to crown all was said,
And they set themselves by his most holy commands.

The Priest was the first who got up and he said
(And, while speaking, the table got many a thumper),
"You know we have met from regard to the dead,
Let us drink to her mem'ry a full flowing bumper."

His wish was obeyed to the spirit and letter,
And the drinking did then in right earnest begin ;
'Twas a wake, many swore they had ne'er seen a better ;
There was lots of poteen, and to drink was no sin.

The jokes flew about like the corks from the bottles ;
There was courting and kissing, and roaring and ranting,
While some round the bed-side were straining their throattles,
With a howl for the dead they were mournfully chanting.

The howling gained strength as the singers proceeded,
And each sung his part as the chanting went on ;
Till in catching the strain each and all had succeeded,
And they chorus'd tremendous the parting Ochone.

An Irishman always is fond of his honour,
 And who will but say he is perfectly right ;
 So when Charley O'Brien insulted O'Connor,
 What wonder the matter should end in a fight.

Each man took a side and a part in the row ;
 There was tumbling and rumbling, and cursing and swearing ;
 The howling was stopp'd, and the women were now
 The caps of each other industriously tearing.

The table broke down in the midst of the fun ;
 The lights were put out, all excepting the fire ;
 A push from behind knock'd an old woman down
 Right slap-bang a-top of old Father M'Guire.

Then louder by far than the noise of them all
 Might be heard, 'mid his groanings, the priest's malediction ;
 He swore he would punish them all for his fall,
 For the devil a one would have his benediction.

The combatants felt the effects of the whisky,
 The potations of all had been many and deep ;
 And they who before had been merry and frisky
 Were glad to sink down on the floor in a sleep.

The priest left the house and to go home attempted,
 But nigh broke his neck tumbling over a log ;
 And his rashness he very soon after repented
 When he stuck firm and fast in a hole in the bog !

And so ended the wake of young Pat Murphy's mother,
 As decent a woman as lives among ten :
 'Twas the first wake I saw, and I fear such another
 I won't have the fortune to witness again.

